

## Message Text

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ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00

ERDA-07 DODE-00 EB-08 EPA-04 INR-07 IO-13 L-03

NSF-02 NSC-05 NSAE-00 PM-04 USIA-15 SS-15 SP-02

FEAE-00 INT-05 /125 W

-----231900Z 052720 /45

R 230923Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7739

INFO USDOC WASHDC

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

UNCLAS JIDDA 2244

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, SA

SUBJECT: PROPOSED TECHNICAL MISSION/SEMINAR ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

SUMMARY: EMBASSY HAS SERIOUS RESERVATIONS ABOUT UTILITY OF PROMOTING THIS THEME IN NEAR FUTURE IN SAUDI ARABIA GIVEN SPORADIC ATTENTION AND INTEREST BY SAG OFFICIALS IN ENVIRONMENTAL/POLLUTION CONTROLS. ENVISIONED MAY TIMING CONFLICTS HEAD ON WITH ALREADY CROWDED SAUDI TRADE PROMOTIONAL SCHEDULE. RECOMMEND DROPPING SAUDI ARABIA FROM CONSIDERATION. SUBJECT MAY BE APPROPRIATE TOPIC FOR CONSIDERATION BY JOINT ECONOMIC COMMISSION. END SUMMARY.

1. OVER PAST YEAR EMBOFFS HAVE BEEN IMPRESSED WITH

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DEGREE OF UNINTEREST BY SAG OFFICIALS IN ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROLS. FIRST SAG PRIORITY IS TO BUILD INDUSTRIAL BASE; FEW PLANNERS HAVE EXPRESSED SENSITIVITY TO NEED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING OR POSSIBILITY OF THEIR BECOMING CONVINCED OF ITS UTILITY AT THIS STAGE OF SAUDI DEVELOPMENT. BEST EXAMPLE IS THAT SAG LAST YEAR TOLD BECHTEL TO REMOVE ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROLS

ELEMENT FROM JUBAIL MASTER PLAN. THERE IS, HOWEVER, EVIDENCE OF SAG INTEREST IN CONTROLLING MARINE POLLUTION AS SHOWN BY RECENTLY HELD REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON RED SEA ENVIRONMENT IN ADDITION TO UPCOMING KUWAIT MEETING ON THE GULF. ANOTHER SERIOUS CONCERN IS CONTROL OF SEEPAGE FROM PRIVATE SEPTIC TANKS WHICH HAVE PROLIFERATED IN SAUDI TOWNS PENDING CONSTRUCTION OF SEWER SYSTEMS.

2. EMBOFF CONTACTED DEAN OF RIYADH UNIVERSITY ENGINEERING FACULTY TO EXPLORE SUBJECT. HE WILL REPORT BACK OPINIONS OF COLLEAGUES INCLUDING UNIVERSITY'S INTEREST, IF ANY, IN SEMINAR. HE STATED THAT ANOTHER DEPARTMENT OF RIYADH UNIVERSITY HAD ONCE PLANNED SEMINAR THIS THEME BUT DROPPED IT FOR UNKNOWN REASONS. HE ADDED THAT MAY IS TOO CLOSE, TOO HOT AND EXAM TIME; HE WOULD PREFER OCT/NOV TIMING AT EARLIEST.

3. DR. ABDUL BAR-AL-GAIN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL, METEOROLOGICAL CENTER AND HEAD OF METEOROLOGICAL AND ARID LAND STUDIES DEPARTMENT OF KING ABDULAZIZ UNIVERSITY, JIDDA, CONFIRMED HIS INTEREST IN THEME AND PROPOSED CO-SPONSORING SEMINAR ALONG LINES OF FEBRUARY 77 USDOC-ORGANIZED EDP/COMPUTER SEMINAR. HE ALSO CITED PLANS AFOOT SOMEWHERE IN MIDEAST FOR PRIVATE SEMINAR THIS THEME BUT COULD NOT PROVIDE DETAILS. HE RECOMMENDS ANY U.S. SEMINAR COINCIDE WITH OTHER EVENTS (HE WILL REPORT ANY INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON OTHER SEMINAR THIS COMING WEEK).  
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4. CO-SPONSORSHIP OF SEMINAR BY ABOVE AGENCIES WOULD MOST LIKELY PRODUCE ATTENDANCE BY ACADEMICIANS AND TECHNICIANS. AS HAPPENED WITH FEBRUARY COMPUTER SEMINAR, LOCAL BUSINESSMEN PROBABLY COULD CARE LESS AND WILL NOT ATTEND. SAME DOUBTS APPLY FOR SAG OFFICIALS UNLESS THEY ALSO PARTICIPATE IN SEMINAR PROGRAM. AT COMPUTER SEMINAR, U.S. PARTICIPANTS COMPLAINED ABOUT LACK OF BUSINESS ATTENDANCE AND FELT THEIR IMPACT WAS DILUTED BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT THE SOLE SPEAKERS.

5. USDOC/CAGNE ALREADY KNOWS SAUDI TRADE PROMOTIONAL SCHEDULE CONSISTING OF FOUR IOGA MISSIONS IN 50-DAY PERIOD MID-APRIL TO MID-JUNE. NONE OF OUR THREE CONSTITUENT POSTS CAN GIVE ADEQUATE ATTENTION TO A FIFTH EVENT WHICH, AS A SEMINAR, REQUIRES MORE TIME AND COORDINATION THAN ANY TRADE MISSION.

6. SAUDI OCTOBER SCHEDULE ALREADY INCLUDES PRO-

CESS CONTROLS TECHNICAL SALES SEMINAR, PERHAPS  
THE FLOATING TRADE FAIR, AND APPARENTLY THE GULF  
AND WESTERN IOGA TRADE MISSION. WE CANNOT  
REALISTICALLY HANDLE ADDITIONAL EVENTS DURING  
THIS "WINDOW" BETWEEN RAMADAN AND PILGRIMAGE.  
THUS ANY NEW SEMINARS MUST COME IN CY 1978 OR  
LATER.

7. EMBASSY BELIEVES ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL IS  
SUBJECT WHICH AT WORST FINDS FEW ENTHUSIASTS HERE  
AND AT BEST REQUIRES MORE TIME FOR LOCAL SUPPORT  
TO BE IDENTIFIED AND ENCOURAGED. IT IS WEAKEST  
THEME AMONG OTHER EVENTS SCHEDULED OR PLANNED  
HERE THROUGH FY 1978. WE RECOMMEND EVENT GO ELSE-  
WHERE IN WHICH CASE EMBASSY WOULD ENCOURAGE  
INTERESTED SAUDIS TO PARTICIPATE ON INDIVIDUAL  
BASIS.

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8. SUGGEST THAT COMMERCE/EPA MAY WISH INITIATE  
DISCUSSIONS WITH TREASURY/JECOR TO DETERMINE UTILITY  
OF PROPOSED THEME AND EVENT IN SAUDI ARABIA UNDER  
JECOR AUSPICES.

9. COMMERCE/EPA MAY FIND APPROACH WOULD BE INVITING  
THE HANDFUL (FIVE OR FEWER) OF SAUDIS CONCERNED WITH  
ENVIRONMENT CONTROLS TO VISIT U.S.  
PORTER

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